

Widely-Held Expectations in Intellectual Development

Birth–3 years	3–5 years	5–7 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make direct contact with their environment to the best of their ability—doing, seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling (Put objects in their mouth) ▪ Are beginning to develop an understanding of language and how it works (imitating sounds, saying words, putting words together) ▪ Are learning to name objects and may use the same word for two or more objects (all vehicles called “cars”) ▪ Express themselves through scribbles, lines, and circles ▪ “Read” pictures for meaning; begin to recognize that writing has meaning (writing is intended for communication) ▪ Are likely to think about time in the “here and now” ▪ Are increasingly able to identify familiar faces, toys, places, and activities ▪ Are developing personal choice (a favorite blanket or toy) ▪ May be interested in grouping objects (putting all the large animals to bed and leaving the small ones to play) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to explore the world around them by object manipulation and direct experience (playing) ▪ Begin to understand cause and effect (“I fell, I cried, I hurt”) ▪ Begin to use language to name objects and their own direct experience of them (“stove-hot”) ▪ Name objects and may find two objects are alike in some way (cats and dogs are animals) ▪ Are developing a sense of how writing and reading work ▪ Combine drawing and “writing”—drawing conveys most of meaning ▪ Play at reading—“read” pictures (telling story from pictures) ▪ Begin to read commercial and traffic signs (STOP) ▪ Continue to develop an understanding that writing conveys a message ▪ May think of tomorrow as “after my sleep” and use words like “tomorrow” and “yesterday” though not always correctly ▪ May learn nursery rhymes, songs, and addresses, but without really trying to remember ▪ Begin to assert personal choice in decision-making (“No broccoli!”) ▪ Are developing an interest in the number of things ▪ Are increasingly interested in counting although the number may not match the number of objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to learn from direct experience (playing) ▪ Expand and refine knowledge with increasing understanding of cause and effect (“I can go to my friend’s house if I call home when I get there.”) ▪ Continue to expand their understanding and use of language to clarify thinking and learning ▪ Are continuing to develop a sense of how writing and reading work ▪ Combine drawing and writing to convey ideas ▪ Understand that print “tells” the story ▪ Develop a basic vocabulary of personal words ▪ Read slowly and deliberately ▪ Will substitute words that make sense when reading ▪ Developing an understanding of words like “tomorrow;” may still be unsure about length of time (“Is it ready?” or “Are we there yet?”) ▪ May begin to organize information to remember it (own telephone number, sound-symbol relations) ▪ Continue to assert personal choice in decision-making (what to wear to school) ▪ Begin to understand that the number of objects does not change when grouped in different ways ▪ Are developing the ability to match counting 1, 2, 3 with number of objects

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7–9 years	9–11 years	11–13 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May begin to do multi-step problems using objects to manipulate and count (blocks, fingers, buttons) ▪ Continue to deepen understanding of cause and effect (“If I don’t go right home after school, my parents will worry.”) ▪ Continue to expand their understanding and use of language to clarify thinking and learning ▪ May work with simple metaphors (“My horse runs like the wind.”) ▪ Begin using writing and reading for specific purposes ▪ Combine drawing and writing; writing can stand alone to convey meaning ▪ Develop a rapidly increasing vocabulary of sight words ▪ Begin to self-correct errors ▪ Develop the ability to read silently ▪ Increase ability to read aloud fluently with expression ▪ May be learning to tell time and becoming more adept at understanding the meaning of “before,” “soon,” “later” ▪ Are increasingly able to organize and rehearse information in order to remember, but may still forget ▪ Continue to develop a need for increased ownership in decision-making (games, projects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to use direct experience, objects, and visual aids to help understanding ▪ Continue to expand and deepen understanding of cause and effect (“I can have a pet, if I take care of it.”) ▪ Continue to broaden understanding of language and its use to clarify thinking and learning ▪ May begin to use puns (“A cow is a lawn mooer.”) ▪ Can expand thinking more readily through writing and reading ▪ Increase reading vocabulary ▪ Continue to self-correct errors ▪ Read silently with increased speed and comprehension (Silent reading speed greater than oral speed may result in oral reading difficulties) ▪ Adjust reading rate to suit purpose (scanning) ▪ Expand reading skills to gather information from a variety of sources ▪ Make personal choices in reading for pleasure ▪ Continue to develop understanding of time-year in terms of important events—but may forget dates and responsibilities ▪ Continue to develop the ability to purposefully organize and remember information ▪ Continue to need increased ownership in decision-making (clothing, friends, activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin to develop ability to “manipulate” thoughts and ideas but still need hands-on experiences ▪ Do some abstract reasoning ▪ Refine understanding of cause and effect (“If I do, I can’t go outside.”) ▪ Continue to broaden knowledge, understanding, and use of language to clarify thinking and learning ▪ Often like jokes and words with double meanings ▪ Continue to expand thinking more readily through writing and reading ▪ Continue to increase silent reading rate and time spent at reading ▪ Continue to increase ability to adjust rate and reading to suit purpose (skim, scan, select, study) ▪ Continue to broaden their interests in a variety of fiction and non-fiction ▪ Begin to understand people may interpret same material in different ways ▪ May be able to talk about recent events, plan for the future and career aspirations ▪ May begin to develop more complex schemes to aid memory ▪ Need ownership in decision-making with the continued guidance of a responsible person ▪ Develop ideas about real objects and their properties—length, area, mass, capacity, and volume—through direct experiences and by thinking about those experiences